NEW ZEALAND LAW FOUNDATION
2018 ETHEL BENJAMIN SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

There are three winners of the 2018 New Zealand Law Foundation Ethel Benjamin Scholarship, an award that supports postgraduate research in law that will protect and promote the legal interests of the New Zealand public.

This year’s recipients are Taylor Burgess, Kate Stone and Rez Gardi.

**Taylor Burgess** graduated from the University of Auckland with a BA (Philosophy) and a Bachelor of Laws (Honours), graduating top of her cohort.

She is currently an Assistant Crown Counsel in the Crown Law Office, acting for the Ministry of Health and Oranga Tamariki on public, administrative and constitutional law matters.

Taylor plans to pursue her interest in public health and human rights law in her LLM studies at Yale University in the United States.

“"I plan to write an independent research paper that examines how the New Zealand Courts should strike a balance between government powers and individual rights in the contemporary public health environment," says Taylor.

Recent debate and legal challenges on public health issues such as the right of government to intervene in matters such as the fluoridation of drinking water supply have highlighted the importance of this field of study.

“On the one hand, the government is entrusted with intrusive powers to act in the collective interests of the populace… On the other hand, public health powers intrude into the private sphere of an individual and engage the fundamental values of privacy, personal autonomy and bodily integrity,” she says

“"It is the perfect time to examine the Courts’ role in striking this balance and to develop a robust Bill of Rights framework for the future scrutiny of public health decision-making in New Zealand.""

Information about Kate Stone and Rez Gardi, the other 2018 winners of this scholarship, is available on the LawFoundation’s web site.

The Ethel Benjamin scholarship honours New Zealand’s first woman barrister and solicitor, who was admitted to the bar in 1897. Since the centenary of this event, the Law Foundation has awarded this scholarship annually to outstanding New Zealand women law graduates for post-graduate study.

The award is worth up to $50,000 and details of the award and previous winners can be found on the Ethel Benjamin Scholarship page of the Foundation’s website.